

Raw drinking milk guidance

Guidance for food businesses on selling, sampling and testing raw drinking milk, including information on tuberculosis and raw cows' drinking milk.

Raw drinking milk (RDM) for sale direct to the final consumer is a high-risk food product and as such is subject to stricter controls.

Approval and registration

If are not already registered as a food business, you will need to register with us.

If you are already registered but are now intending to start selling raw drinking milk, you will need to notify us of your intention to sell.

You can register with us or notify us of your intention to sell raw drinking milk using the application for registration of milk production holding form.

If you need any advice or help with your application, you can contact us by emailing:

approvals@food.gov.uk

England and Wales

WORD

[View Application or notification of amendment for a milk production holding as Word\(Open in a new window\)](#) (132.86 KB)

Northern Ireland

You can apply for registration in Northern Ireland with [Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in Northern Ireland](#).

Registration process

When we receive your application, the following will happen:

- one of our Dairy Hygiene Inspectors will visit the holding and carry out an inspection - if conditions on the holding are acceptable, then a sample of raw milk will be taken and analysed under food hygiene legislation
- once the sample has been analysed with a satisfactory outcome we will inform you and the local authority

Registering with local authorities

We will inform the local authorities about the proposed RDM operation, however you should also contact your local authority as they may wish to see the filling and bottling process.

Guidance for producers of RDM

This guidance will help you to understand your legal obligations and apply best practice.

It should be read in conjunction with the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006.

For the purpose of this guidance, you are classed as the occupier of the holding from where the milk-producing animals are kept.

We recommend that this document is read and understood before you begin production of raw drinking milk for sale direct to the final consumer.

PDF

[View Raw drinking milk business guidance as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (315.95 KB)

Important

References to EU legislation in FSA guidance

Directly applicable EU legislation no longer applies in GB. EU legislation retained when the UK exited the EU became assimilated law on 1 January 2024, published on legislation.gov.uk. References to any legislation in FSA guidance with 'EU' or 'EC' in the title (e.g. Regulation (EC) 178/2002) should now be regarded as assimilated law where applicable to GB. References to 'Retained EU Law' or 'REUL' should now be regarded as references to assimilated law.

For businesses moving goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, information on [the Windsor Framework](#) is available on GOV.UK.

The Windsor Framework was adopted by the UK and EU on 24 March 2023. The Framework provides a unique set of arrangements to support the flow of agrifood retail products from Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI), allowing GB standards for public health in relation to food, marketing and organics to apply for pre-packed retail goods moved via the NI Retail Movement Scheme (NIRMS).

Raw cream

The sale of raw cream:

- is not subject to the restrictions at production holding and milking premises
- must comply with all the requirements that apply to milk products under dairy hygiene rules and microbiological standards
- must be made with milk meeting the herd status criteria - milk may only be sold direct to consumers by the occupier of a registered milk production holdings and RDM must comply with dairy hygiene rules and microbiological standards
- raw cream is not required to carry the health warning but the words 'made with raw milk' must be displayed on the product
- compliance with these requirements is monitored through risk-based inspections